The Life of Isa in Islam:
Written by: Ahmad Musa Jibril

The life of the Prophet Isa alayhe salam has been a topical issue of late in the media as well as in popular culture. There is a new awareness and heightened curiosity worldwide regarding the amazing life and miracles of Isa alayhe salam. His personality has impacted the three major religions of this world, namely Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Given the importance of his time on earth, it is critical for mankind to fully understand his pivotal role in shaping history as well as the final days.
The importance of Isa alayhe salam is apparent in the status that is assigned to him in Islam. He was the last messenger and prophet before the Prophet Muhammad salla allahu alayhe wasalam, as well as the last messenger of Bani Israel. Allah has bestowed a special favor on the family of Isa alayhe salam by mentioning his name 25 times, and his mother's 31 times in the Quran. Isa's name is mentioned in the Quran even more than the Prophet Muhammad's name. Prophet Isa's mention is noted in ten different situations in the Quran. There is even an entire chapter (surah) named after Isa's mother, Maryam alayha salam, as well as his grandparents, Al-Imran alayhum asalam, who were chosen over all of mankind. This surah, Surat Al-Imran, also reveals the story of Maryam alayha salam. It outlines a description of her lineage and upbringing. It also relates the pure conception and birth of Isa alayhe salam.
The fact that Isa's story is mentioned in the Quran, highlights his importance. There are incidents mentioned related to him or his mother in one part, and then completed in another. This adds to the reader's curiosity concerning his status and keeps one interested in his story, and his revered status in Islam.

At the crux of the Isa story is how he is caught between two groups. On the one hand, there are the Jews, who in their hatred claim that he is not a messenger and want nothing less than his crucifixion. On the other hand, there are the Christians, who raised him to a level of extreme glorification, claiming he is the son of God and God's incarnate.

There were among the children of Israel many pious people, and from them was the family of Imran alayhum asalam, as stated in the Quran.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَى آدَمَ وَنُوحًا وَآلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَآلَ عِمْرَانَ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ
ذُرِّيَّةً بَعْضُهَا مِنْ بَعْضٍ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

Allah chose Adam, Noah, the family of Abraham and the family of Imran above the Alaamin (mankind and jinns) (of their times). Offspring, one of the other, and Allah is the All-Hearer, All-Knower. 3:33-34

Imran alayhe salam was a pious, adherent, worshiping man whose family chain linked back to Dawud alayhe salam. It was due to the piety of Al-Imran family that Allah saved their generation from mischief and evil. However, Imran's wife, Hannah bint Fakood alayha salam, was unable to give birth to children. One day after having seen a mother bird care for its young by regurgitating food into their mouths, it was

then Hannah desired children for herself. This, however, was not conceivable since she was beyond the child-bearing age, and was not even able to do so during those years. She prayed to Allah for a child, and He who responds to his servant by "Kun Fayakun", answered her prayer. As soon as she felt the child's movements in her womb, she promised to dedicate the child to the service of Allah, as gratitude to Allah.

(Remember) when the wife of Imran said, "Oh my Lord! I have vowed to You what (the child that) is in my womb to be dedicated for Your services (free from all worldly work; to serve Your place of worship), so accept this, from me. Verily, You are the All-Hearer, the All-Knowing. 3:35

إِذْ قَالَتِ امْرَأَةُ عِمْرَانَ رَبِّ إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لَكَ مَا فِي بَطْنِي مُحَرَّرًا فَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّي إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

She wanted a male child to give to the maintenance of Beit AlMaqdis, a place of worship in Jerusalem, since that was the tradition of the time. There were many reasons for having a male in this position. The main reason was due to the predominately male atmosphere which preferentially required men to be the family delegate in the social setting. Another reason was when a woman is on her period, she would be unable to attend to the place of worship's needs, which is a day-to-day responsibility. Finally, the caretaker of Beit AlMaqdis would have to reside there or in its proximity, potentially compromising the security of a female caretaker.

Finally, Hannah gave birth to a girl:

Then when she delivered her (child Mary), she said:
"Oh my Lord! I have delivered a female child,"-and Allah knew better what she delivered- "And the male is not like the female, and I have named her Mary, and I seek refuge with you (Allah) for her and for her offspring from Satan, the outcast." 3:36

فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتْهَا قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَضَعْتُهَا أُنْثَى وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا وَضَعَتْ وَلَيْسَ الذَّكَرُ كَالْأُنْثَى وَإِنِّي سَمَّيْتُهَا مَرْيَمَ وَإِنِّي أُعِيذُهَا بِكَ وَذُرِّيَّتَهَا مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

Despite Hannah's disappointment, Allah knew ultimately what was best. He had planned for Maryam alayha asalam to be the first female caretaker of Beit AlMaqdis.

Allah had bestowed upon Maryam alayha salam many blessings. The Prophet Muhammad salla allahu alayhe wasalam said she is of the best of women. She is among the four women that are guaranteed heaven. The others being Khadija, the wife of the Prophet, Asiya, the wife of Fir'aun, and Fatima, the daughter of Prophet Muhammad. Maryam was the only woman whose son is attributed to her, rather than the father. She was the only woman to have been chosen for the pure birth of a prophet. She was also honored as being the mother of one of the most important figures in history.

وَإِنِّي أُعِيذُهَا بِكَ وَذُرِّيَّتَهَا مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

"And I seek refuge with you (Allah) for her and for her offspring from Satan, the outcast." 3:36

In Bukhari, the Prophet said, "There is no newborn except the Shaytan pokes him in his side, thereby coming out crying, except Maryam and her son." Abu Huraira then recited, "وَإِنِّي أُعِيذُهَا بِكَ وَذُرِّيَّتَهَا

This hadith is evidence that Hannah's dua to seek refuge in Allah for her progeny from the devil was answered. In fact, this dua was answered fully since Maryam alayha salam and Isa alayhe salam did not have the effect of the devil on them. This would have been true for any offspring that followed. However, her lineage ended with Isa.

فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ وَأَنْبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا وَكَفَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا

"So her Lord (Allah) accepted her with goodly acceptance. He made her grow in good manner and put her under the care of Zakariya." 3:37

"Fataqaballaha" meaning Allah accepted Hannah's pledge and desire to give Maryam to the service of Beit AlMaqdis. Allah gave her an outer appearance of peace and tranquility. Hannah alayha salam then took Maryam alayha salam to reside among the pious, so that she would learn and worship with them.

ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يُلْقُونَ أَقْلَامَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ يَكْفُلُ مَرْيَمَ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يَخْتَصِمُونَ
"This is part of the news of the Ghaib (unseen) which We inspire you with (Oh Muhammad). You were not with them, when they cast lots with their pens as to which of them should be charged with the care of Mary; nor were you with them when they disputed. 3:44

A crowd gathered as Hannah alayha salam carried Maryam alayha salam to Beit AlMaqdis. Hannah addressed them and said she had given an oath to Allah that her offspring would be dedicated to the service of Beit AlMaqdis. She was unable to enter the masjid due to her menstrual cycle, and refused to take Maryam back home because of the oath she had given. Hannah needed someone to take care of and watch over Maryam by giving her food, water, and clothing.
Zakariya alayhe salam, who was also a messenger, stepped forward for her care. He volunteered to take care of Maryam alayha salam, since his wife was Maryam's aunt (her mother's sister), or his wife was Maryam's sister (depending on the conflicting narrations; however, it is probable that he was Maryam's brother-in-law).
However, others also wanted the honor of caring for Maryam alayha salam. The dispute continued and the decision was made to draw lots, kur'ah.[1] There are two

[1] Kur'ah was narrated to us as being performed by messengers in three different situations. The first example was with Prophet Younis, alayse salam. Prophet Younis, along with other people, were on a ship when it started to sink. The people on the ship stated the reason the ship was sinking was due to someone who had disobeyed his master.

different narrations as to how the dispute was settled. The first narration states that pens that were used for writing the Tawrah were cast into the river. A young child who had not reached the age of puberty would select a pen and the owner of it would be the one responsible for the care of Maryam alayha salam. This was done three times, and each time Zakariya's pen was chosen. The second narration states that several pens were cast out. The owner of the pen that went against the current would be responsible for Maryam's care. This was done three times, and each time Zakariya's pen was chosen.
Allah chose Zakariya alayhe salam to be Maryam's caretaker since he was the best among the people of that time. He was a messenger of Allah with the most knowledge and fiqh and could convey it to Maryam alayha salam. In addition, Allah wanted to inspire Zakariya alayhe salam through miracles Maryam alayha salam received.

كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا الْمِحْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا قَالَ يَا مَرْيَمُ أَنَّى لَكِ هَذَا قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ
Every time that he entered (her) chamber to see her, he found her supplied with sustenance. He said: "O Maryam! From where have you got this?" She said, "From Allah." Verily, Allah provides sustenance to whom He wills, without limit."3:37

Every time Zakariya, who was the only person to enter upon Maryam, came into the mihrab[2] (chamber), he found with Maryam sustenance that was out of season.

أَنَّى لَكِ هذاَ
"O Maryam! From where have you got this?"3:37

قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ
She said: "From Allah." Verily, Allah provides sustenance to whom He wills, without limit."3:37

This sustenance was not from a creation, but rather from Allah, the one who provides without limits. Allah made Zakariya alayhe salam notice that Maryam alayha salam was truly blessed and because of the miracles he witnessed, Zakariya asked Allah for a child in order to further carry on the message of Allah. Instantly, his dua was answered.

هُنَالِكَ دَعَا زَكَرِيَّا رَبَّهُ قَالَ رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ

They decided to do kur'ah, draw lots, to see who was the cause of the ship to sink. They placed all the names into a jar, and Younis's name was pulled out. Therefore, they threw him overboard where Allah commanded a whale to swallow him. The second example was with Zakariya, which is mentioned above. The third is of Prophet Muhammad, sallahu alayhe wasalam, where if he needed to make a decision as to which wife to take with him on a trip, he would place all the names in a jar. The name that was chosen would be the wife that would accompany him on his trip.

[2] It should be noted the mihrab was an upper level room in or atop a place of worship that was solely used for worship. This is unlike today's understanding of what a mihrab is--the place where the Imam prays and leads the prayer.

فَنَادَتْهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَائِمٌ يُصَلِّي فِي الْمِحْرَابِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيَحْيَى مُصَدِّقًا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَسَيِّدًا وَحَصُورًا وَنَبِيًّا مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ

3:38-39

"At that time Zakariya invoked his Lord, saying: "O my Lord! Grant me from You, a good offspring. You are indeed the All-Hearer of invocation." 3:38

"Then the angels called him, while he was standing in prayer in al-Mihrab (a praying place) (saying): "Allah gives you glad tidings of Yahya (John) confirming (believing in) the Word from Allah (i.e. creation of Jesus the word from Allah "Be! And he was!), noble, keeping away from sexual relations with women, a Prophet, from among the righteous." 3:39

He said: "Oh my Lord! Make a sign for me." Allah said: "Your sign is that you shall not speak to mankind for three days except with signals. And remember your Lord much (by praising Him again and again), and glorify (Him), in the afternoon and in the morning." 3:40

In another verse Allah mentions that Zakariya alayhe salam used to praise him. Though seemingly contradictory, Zakariya alayhe salam refrained from engaging in worldly matters, but continued to utter the praise of Allah.

From this example, Allah shows us his supremacy in his provision whether or not the means are available. This is specifically illustrated in three ways. The first being where the means are provided and one receives the offspring. In this case, a male and female are healthy and are able to conceive children. The second is a situation where the means are available but one is unable to conceive, as was the case with Zakariya alayhe salam. Finally, a situation where the means are not available and yet one is able to conceive. Isa and Adam are two examples of the latter situation. That is why depending entirely on the means is shirk. Allah teaches us through the story of Maryam alayha salam that his powers are limitless and he reigns supreme over all things. Therefore, our trust should be placed with Him.

As Maryam alayha salam was praying the angels came to her and said:

وَإِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَا مَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاكِ وَطَهَّرَكِ وَاصْطَفَاكِ عَلَى نِسَاءِ

And (remember) when the angels said: "Oh Mary! Verily, Allah has chosen you, purified you (from polytheism and disbelief), and chosen you above the women of the Alamin (mankind and jinns)."
3:42

In one verse Allah, subhana watala has shown Maryam alayha salam his favor twice by choosing her over the rest of the women of creation.

The story and Maryam alayha salam and Isa alayhe salam is revealed in Surat Maryam.

وَاذْكُرْ فِي الْكِتَابِ مَرْيَمَ إِذِ انْتَبَذَتْ مِنْ أَهْلِهَا مَكَانًا شَرْقِيًّا

And mention in the Book (the Quran, O Muhammad, the story of) Mary, when she withdrew in seclusion from her family to a place facing east. 19:16

Maryam alayha salam left the mihrab towards the east of Jerusalem.[3] There are three narrations as to why she left the mihrab. One states she needed to relieve herself. Another one states that because she was on her menstrual cycle she was unable to stay in the mihrab. The third narration states she wanted to worship alone in seclusion. There is not one narration that is stronger than the other. However, the emphasis is on her desire to stay apart from society, which is indicative of her nature.

فَاتَّخَذَتْ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ حِجَابًا فَأَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهَا رُوحَنَا فَتَمَثَّلَ لَهَا بَشَرًا سَوِيًّا

She placed a screen (to screen herself) from them; then We sent to her our Ruh (Angel Jibril), and he appeared before her in the form of a man in all respects. 19:17

In this aya, Maryam screens herself with a hijab, which means a physical barrier or piece of clothing, which prevents her from being seen.

فَأَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهَا رُوحَنَا
"We sent to her Our angel" 19:17

In the Quran, Allah uses the word "rooh", or soul, which refers to Angel Jibril. Angel Jibril is called the soul for three reasons. He is the soul of human kind and delivers what is needed for salvation, as well as what fuels the spirit. Second, the term "ya roohy" is like a term of endearment, expressed to the most beloved creation of Allah. Finally, Angel Jibril is a spiritual being that exudes all things good and pure, without being tainted by evil.

Angel Jibril has appeared in different forms, depending who the message was being carried to. When he came to the Prophet Muhammad salla allahu alayhe wasalam, he came in his original form. When he asked Prophet Muhammad salla allahu alayhe wasalam to recite he lifted one wing which covered the horizon. The Prophet was so terrified that he went running back in fear to his wife and cried to her, cover me, cover me.

However, when he appeared to Maryam alayha salam, he revealed himself as a man.

فَتَمَثَّلَ لَهَا بَشَرًا سَوِيًّا
19:17
means in a beautiful handsome male figure.

Based on the premise that Angel Jibril revealed himself to her, can one say that Maryam was a prophet or messenger? There are two opinions on this issue. The former being that few scholars adopt the opinion that she was a prophet since Angel

[3] Ibn Abbas once commented regarding this verse (S.19:16) stating, "Wallahi, I know why the Christians take the east as their qiblah (direction). This is because Maryam went towards the east."

Jibril came to her. Though, a vast majority say she was not a prophet and is actually a waliya, or one who is close to Allah.
One who receives revelation is not necessarily a prophet. An aya in the Quran in Surat Al-Nahl states, “Wawha rabuka ila al-nahl”16:68, Allah gave revelation to the bees. This supports the fact that mere reception of revelation does not mean prophethood. Another reason that supports her being a waliya is that a female messenger would be required to travel, which would be unsafe for her. It would also be difficult for a female prophet to convey the message of Allah due to menstruation, pregnancy, or childbirth. The most decisive proof is the aya in surah 5, verse 75 which states, “Wa Ummuhu sideeqa”, his (Jesus) mother was a woman of truth (high ranked believer).
The term “sawia” (19:17) in this verse describes Angel Jibril. This word implies he has no deficiency in his character, nor is he a horrible sight. All angels come in this form. In order not to frighten Maryam alayha salam, Angel Jibril appeared to her as a handsome man. Due to her lack of contact with men, and Angel Jibril’s actual alarming form, it was important that he appeared to her as a handsome man.

قَالَتْ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِالرَّحْمَنِ مِنْكَ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَقِيًّا

She said: “Verily! I seek refuge with the Most Beneficent (Allah) from you, if you do fear Allah.” 19:18

When Angel Jibril came to Maryam alayha salam, she was horrified and speechless, but her response was that of a pious woman. Her warning to stay away would apply only to one who fears Allah. It would be useless to make such a statement for those who do not have any fear from Allah. Of all the possible names and attributes of Allah, Maryam alayha salam referred to Him as ArRahman, the merciful, rather than the Vengeful or the Mighty. She appealed to His having mercy on her weakness, on being female, on being alone.

قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَنَا رَسُولُ رَبِّكِ لِأَهَبَ لَكِ غُلَامًا زَكِيًّا

(The angel) said: “I am only a Messenger from your Lord, (to announce) to you the gift of a righteous son.” 19:19

Angel Jibril comforted her and tried to calm her by saying he was a messenger from Allah. She believed him because she saw in him purity, or some say that Allah inspired her to believe in him.

لِأَهَبَ لَكِ

Here the verse says to grant you (it refers to granting something with nothing expected in return). Angel Jibril was sent to grant Maryam a baby boy by the will of Allah.

غُلَامًا زَكِيًّا

One of the attributes of that boy is zaky, meaning that he is pure and not an illegitimate child.

قَالَتْ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَلَمْ يَمْسَسْنِي بَشَرٌ وَلَمْ أَكُ بَغِيًّا

She said: "How shall I have a son, seeing that no man has touched me, nor am I unchaste?" 19:20

Maryam alayha salam was appalled to hear that she would bear a child when she was not married nor had been touched by a man. Her modesty and honor would be compromised.

بَغِيًّا

The term "baghiyya" (19:20) implies someone who prostitutes and desires men. Maryam adamantly exclaims that she is not one who follows such desires.

قَالَ كَذَٰلِكِ قَالَ رَبُّكِ هُوَ عَلَيَّ هَيِّنٌ وَلِنَجْعَلَهُ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ وَرَحْمَةً مِنَّا وَكَانَ أَمْرًا مَقْضِيًّا

He said: "So (it will be), your Lord said: 'That is easy for Me (Allah): and (We wish) to appoint him as a sign to mankind and a mercy from Us (Allah), and it is a matter (already) decreed, (by Allah).' " 19:21

Jibril informs Maryam alayha salam that Allah's commands are effortless and He wills it and so it happens. Just as Allah granted Zakirya a child, he is capable of doing the same for Maryam alayha salam.[4]

هَيِّنٌ وَلِنَجْعَلَهُ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ وَرَحْمَةً

He (Jesus) was a miracle who brought miracles to mankind.

وَرَحْمَةً مِنَّا

He also was a mercy to humanity and a beacon of salvation through the teachings Allah revealed to him.

وَكَانَ أَمْرًا مَقْضِيًّا

Angel Jibril conveyed to Maryam alayha salam this was something destined by Allah.

The question of Isa's conception was answered in three different ways.[5]

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[4] There are four ways in which to conceive a child. The first way is without a father nor a mother, which is the example of Adam alayse salam. The second is without having a father, like Isa alayhe salam.   The third way is by a man alone, like Hawa'a was created from the rib of Adam. Finally, from both parents, a father and a mother.

[5] From this example, we learn that one question can be answered in many different ways. The answer is dependent on the one who asks and their reasoning for asking. Ibn Abbas was once sitting in a gathering with some of the companions. A man came to him and asked him if someone kills can the person repent. Ibn Abbas replied that he can not. In the same setting, some time after, another man approached and asked the same question. Ibn Abbas replied that he could. The companions were taken aback by the difference in answers. Ibn Abbas replied to them that the first man hadn't killed and if he had replied yes to him, he would have killed and then repented. So based on that, Ibn Abbas stopped him by telling him no that he could not repent. Whereas, the second man had killed and came to ask if he could repent. This time he replied yes to give him the opportunity to repent, rather than having him doomed to hellfire and cause more mischief on this planet.

There are those whose iman overrides their thinking, and this would be the pinnacle of belief, like Abu Bakr and Maryam alayha salam. Abu Bakr was told the Prophet salla allahu alayhe wasalam went from Mecca to Jerusalem and from Jerusalem to the seven skies and returned, all the while his bed was still warm. When questioned by the Kuffar as to if he believed the Prophet salla allahu alayhe wasalam, he replied without hesitation that if he had said it, it was the truth.
Another example is the story of Maryam alayha salam. She was told she would conceive and she questioned the manner of how that would be possible. After Jibril explained "kathalik", she immediately accepted the supreme power of Allah.

The second group of people are those whose thinking governs their iman. They question everything that is told to them. An example of this group is the mu'atazilah. Anything that is presented to them, they use their thinking and rationale to accept or reject it.

Another example of this category is the story of Yousef Al-Najjar, who was Maryam's cousin and caretaker of Beit Al-Maqdis. He asked Maryam alayha salam concerning her unique pregnancy. He had seen her during her pregnancy and was unable to overlook her condition. He approached her hesitantly, knowing that she is a pious believer.   He wished to receive an explanation to satisfy the questions in his mind about her pregnancy. Maryam alayha salam permitted him to ask, emphasizing that he be understanding and kind. He asked her if trees, grass, and plants grow without water. She replied yes, explaining that the One who was able to create it the first time from nothing, can make it grow with and without water. She then asked him who made water before it was water. He replied that Allah did. He asked her can a baby be conceived without a husband.   She answered him by saying the One who created Adam without a father or a mother can create a baby without a father. Then he responded by saying "Inna Allah 'ala kulli shay'in qadeer, Allahu Akbar", Allah has the power over all things, Allah is great, and he believed.

Finally, the third group is one who has no iman and no proper thinking, at times even rejecting concrete or tangible proof. An example of such a people would be the Jews, who repeatedly denied the truth because of their lack of faith and lack of thinking. They had reached a conclusion before hearing an explanation from Maryam alayha salam, due to their stubbornness and arrogance. We can deduce that the best way to deal with such people is through silence. Even after they were shown another miracle, which was Isa alayhe salam speaking as an infant, they still denied Allah's power.

Maryam alayha salam was ordered to remain silent so the infant Isa alayhe salam could speak. This was ordained so Allah could show mankind that he can put words into the mouth of a breast-feeding infant, just as He can create a child in the womb without a father. Yet they do not see, so it is best for one to remain silent.

Jibril blew into the opening at the neck of Maryam's garment and his breath traveled down to her womb and Isa alayhe salam was conceived. She gave birth to Isa alayhe salam, yet remained a virgin. This serves as a lesson to those that try to fathom the power of Allah. One cannot comprehend his power since our intellect is limited, in comprehension.

Who is it that created the earth and formed within it the oceans and grew from it the trees? Who created the wheat and enveloped within it that which preserves it?

The creation of Isa alayhe salam is akin to the creation of Adam alayhe salam. A healthy couple who is unable to bear children compared to another that is blessed with offspring; one must ask who is the provider for one and not the other. Without a doubt, it would be Allah.

According to Ibn Kathir, Maryam alayha salam and her sister, Um Yahya alayha salam, who is also Zakariya's wife, were pregnant at the same time. When Um Yahya was near Maryam, the child in her womb would bow to the child in Maryam's, since at that time sujood was permissible. Um Yahya alayha salam and her unborn baby also felt most comfortable and at peace when they were around Maryam alayha salam. Indeed it was miraculous for the two messengers to communicate before their actual birth. Isa alayhe salam would even speak to his mother while in her womb. If he is not speaking to her, she hears his constant praise and tasbeeh to Allah.

فَحَمَلَتْهُ فَانْتَبَذَ به مكانا قصياً 19:22

And she conceived him, and she withdrew with him to a far place. 19:22

She was aware of the type of society that surrounded her and what their reaction would be. She did not want to submit herself to their accusations, as well as to the agony and anguish of childbirth. It was then she decided to withdraw and seclude herself in a faraway place.

Some narrations say she was pregnant for seven or eight months, however the most authentic narration states that she was pregnant for nine.
At the time of childbirth, she traveled to Beit Lahem, which is present day Bethlehem.

فَأَجَاءَهَا الْمَخَاضُ إِلَى جِذْعِ النَّخْلَةِ قَالَتْ يَا لَيْتَنِي مِتُّ قَبْلَ هَذَا وَكُنْتُ نَسْيًا

And the pains of childbirth drove her to the trunk of a palm-tree. She said: "Would that I had died before this, and had been forgotten and out of sight!"19:23

Usually one holds the hand of a husband or a mother during this trying time, however, with no one around her, Maryam alayha salam grasped onto the branch of a tree. The Quran does not explicitly describe Maryam's childbirth and seems to skip over that fact since it is obvious and apparent, and to maintain the eloquence of the Quran.

يَا لَيْتَنِي مِتُّ قَبْلَ هَذَا وَكُنْتُ نَسْيًا

She said: "Would that I had died before this, and had been forgotten and out of sight!" 19:23

وَكُنْتُ نَسْيًا منسيا

During this time of hardship, Maryam alayha salam wished she was "nasiya mansiya", something forgotten or trivial. From these ayat, one might surmise she questioned Allah's destiny for her, due to a couple of reasons. The first being Maryam alayha salam did not want to be a cause of fitnah for her people. She knew Isa's birth

would be a cause of people either believing or disbelieving in the oneness of Allah. She did not want her unique situation to be the cause of others going to hell. Maryam's conception of Isa alayhe salam without a father, would lead to the claim that Isa was the son of God, therefore implying she is the wife of God.

Another reason was Maryam alayha salam knew her honor would be attacked, and that was difficult for a woman of piety. Finally, some sects claim Maryam alayha salam raised her head to the sky after giving birth and witnessed Allah's Looh Al-Mahfooth, the book where everything is written. She was shown that she would be worshipped by some instead of Allah. However, the latter opinion is false.

Based on Maryam's example, if one was faced with an insurmountable tribulation, it is permissible to ask Allah to take their soul. There are two examples from the time of the Prophet salla allahu alayhe wasalam that illustrate this. It was narrated the Prophet asked Allah that if he was to test his slaves with a fitnah (a major test in their faith), to take his soul prior to it. Umar was also quoted as saying on one occasion, he wished his mother had not given birth to him.

فَنَادَاهَا مِنْ تَحْتِهَا أَلَّا تَحْزَنِي قَدْ جَعَلَ رَبُّكِ تَحْتَكِ سَرِيًّا

Then (the babe Jesus or Jibril) cried unto her from in front of her, saying: "Grieve not! Your Lord has provided a water stream in front of you." 19:24
Maryam heard a call from in front of[6] her telling her not to grieve, and there are 2 narrations as to who the call was from. One narration states it was Angel Jibril, while the other states it was Isa.

أَلَّا تَحْزَنِي

She should not distress about her dishonor or worry about being unable to fulfill the responsibility that Allah endowed upon her.

قَدْ جَعَلَ رَبُّكِ تَحْتَكِ سَرِيًّا

"Sariya" refers to a spring of water from an elevation.

وَهُزِّي إِلَيْكِ بِجِذْعِ النَّخْلَةِ تُسَاقِطْ عَلَيْكِ رُطَبًا جَنِيًّا
"And shake the trunk of palm-tree towards you, it will let fall fresh ripe-dates upon you." 19:25

Allah orders Maryam alayha salam to shake the trunk of the palm-tree towards her, causing the dates to fall as sustenance for her. From this, one can learn that it is imperative for one to put in the effort and then place their trust in Allah. In Tirmidhi, it is stated a man entered the masjid without tying his camel. The Prophet inquired as to why he had not tied it, and he replied he depended on Allah. The

[6] It should be noted the words "taht" and "fawq" in Arabic mean in back of and in front of, as well their original meaning of under and above, respectively. In this case, "taht" implies in front of Maryam.

Prophet responded by saying that he should tie it, and then depend on Allah. One should do what is in their power, and then leave the rest to Allah.

فَكُلِي وَاشْرَبِي وَقَرِّي عَيْنًا فَإِمَّا تَرَيِنَّ مِنَ الْبَشَرِ أَحَدًا فَقُولِي إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَنِ صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أُكَلِّمَ الْيَوْمَ إِنْسِيًّا

"So eat and drink and be glad, and if you see any human being, say: 'Verily! I have vowed a fast unto the Most Beneficient (Allah) so I shall not speak to any human being this day." 19:26
Maryam shook the tree and "balah", dates in their ripe stage, fell upon her. (Dates in their ripe stages have been proven medically to be healthy and ease the process of birth upon a women.) She ate from them, drank water, and was told to be happy after seeing her beautiful baby.

فَإِمَّا تَرَيِنَّ مِنَ الْبَشَرِ أَحَدًا فَقُولِي إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَنِ صَوْمًا

Then Allah revealed to Maryam alayha salam if she was to see anyone, not to answer, and to fast from talk. In the past, people would fast from talking, and this was part of their belief. In Islam, however, it is prohibited to abstain completely from speaking. This is apparent when Abu Bakr deterred his family from fasting from talk, stating it was haram. Another example is when Ibn Masood was talking to two men, one who was refraining from talking. When asked why he did not want to talk, his friend answered he was fasting from talk. Ibn Masood said to fast from talk only applied to Maryam and her situation, and it is not from our religion, and he ordered the man to speak.

فأتت به قومها تحمله19:27
Then she brought him (the baby) to her people, carrying him. 19:27
While Maryam alayha salam was away, her townspeople had gone looking for her. According to most narrations she was away for 40 days. She approached her people with Isa alayhe salam in her arms.

قالوا يامريم لقد جئت شَيْئًا فَرِيًّا
They said: "O Maryam! Indeed you have brought a thing Fariyya (an unheard mighty thing). 19:27
They saw her coming from far away, and expressed their shock at the sight of the baby in her arms. "Fariyya" refers to something unlike any other, and completely unbelievable.

يأخت هارون ما كان ابوك امرئ

"O sister of Harun! Your father was not a man who used to commit adultery, nor your mother was an unchaste woman." 19:28
In a hadith, Mugherah bin Shubah went to debate the people of Najran who were Christians. They asked him does the Quran state that Maryam is Harun's sister, when

in fact, Harun and Musa preceded them by hundreds of years. The Prophet salla allahu alayhe wasalam said people used to be named in honor of the messengers. There are three opinions to clarify this reference. The first is that Maryam alayha salam actually had a brother whose name was Harun, who was named after the messenger Harun. Another opinion was that Maryam had the characteristics of Prophet Harun, being vigilant and pious. Finally, there might have been a pious man at the time of Maryam, named Harun they attributed her prior characteristics to.

The people accused her indirectly of being unchaste and ordered her to speak up. When she refused, they assumed her guilty. Allah chose silence for her, because in certain circumstances silence is better. She pointed to Isa alayhe salam, and they understood that to mean that he would respond. They were bewildered as to how they could speak to one who was still in the cradle.

قالوا كيف نكلم من كان في المهد صبيا

They said: How can we talk to one who is in the cradle, a young boy? 19:29

This is where the miracle begins. The Prophet said three people spoke as infants, and Isa alayhe salam was one of them.[7]

قال اني عبدالله

Isa alayhe salam answered them by saying,
“I am the servant of Allah.” 19:30
This verse is what made Al-Najashy cry and say this is what Isa alayhe salam said. This statement by Isa alayhe salam was clearly denying the status that people would later attribute to him. By stating he was the servant of Allah, he not only negates the curse to Allah and clarifies his status, but also acquits his mother of any lewd behavior.

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[7] Narrated Abu Hurairah, radiullahu anhu: The Prophet sallahu alayhe wasalam said, “None spoke in the cradle but three: (the first was) Jesus, (the second child was): There was a man from Bani Israel called Juraij. While he was offering prayer, his mother came and called him. He said (to himself), “Shall I answer her or keep on praying?” (He went on praying and did not answer her). His mother said, “Oh Allah! Do not let him die until he sees the faces of prostitutes.” So while he was in his hermitage, a lady came and sought to seduce him, but he refused. So she went to a shepherd and presented herself to him to commit illegal sexual intercourse with her, and then later she gave birth to a child and claimed that it belonged to Juraij. The people, therefore, came to him and dismantled his hermitage and expelled him out of it and abused him. Juraij performed ablution and offered prayer, and then came to the child and said: “Oh child! Who is your father?” The child replied, “The shepherd.” (After hearing this) the people said, “We shall rebuild your hermitage of gold.” But he said, “No, of nothing but mud.” (The third was the hero of the following story.) A lady from Bani Israel was nursing her child at her breast when a handsome rider passed by her. She said, “Oh Allah! Make my child like him.” On that, the child left her breast and facing the rider said, “Oh Allah! Do not make me like him.” The child then started to such her breast again. (Abu Hurairah further said, “As if I were now looking at the Prophte salla allahu alayhe wasalam sucking his finger (in way of demonstration.”)) After a while they (some people) passed by, with a lady slave and she (i.e. the child’s mother) said, “Oh Allah! Do not make my child like this (slave-girl)!” On that the child left her breast, and said, “Oh Allah! Make me like her.” When she asked why, the child replied, “The rider is one of the tyrants while this slave-girl is falsely accuse of theft and illegal sexual intercourse.” (Sahih al-Bukhari, Hadith number 3436).

The term “abd Allah” is an honorable name, which is the highest of human ranks. When one is a slave to Allah, no one else can become his master. When Allah wants to favor his prophets, he gives them the name “abd Allah.”

أتاني الكتاب

Isa alayhe salam, while only a few days old, told the people he has received the scripture. He did not actually receive it at that moment, but rather he knew Allah had chosen him as a messenger and would receive it. Knowing it’s something surely going to happen in the future, he words it as though it has happened.

وجعلني نبيا

The verse states Isa alayhe salam is a prophet, that he would receive revelation and a scripture from Allah. Again, he was in his crib describing himself as a messenger, although it did not happen. He used such terms because it’s surely to take place.

وجعلني مباركا اينما كنت
Allah blessed Isa alayhe salam because he guided people to the path of righteousness and ordained virtue and forbade evil. He also had the unique ability to cure the ill and bring the dead back to life by the will of Allah as he repeatedly stated.

واوصاني بالصلاوة والزكاة ما دمت حيا
And he has enjoined on me prayer, and Zakat, as long as I live. 19:31

وبرا بوالدتي
And dutiful to my mother, and made me not arrogant, unblest.
19:32
والسلام علي يوم ولدت ويوم اموت ويوم ابعث حيا
Peace on me the day I was born, and the day I die, and the day I shall be raised alive![8]
19:33
There were some who believed that she was speaking the truth. Others and most, however, believed she was using black magic and was attempting to deceive them. They were not convinced and continued to believe her as being unchaste and questioned the manner in which Isa alayhe salam was conceived.

ذلك عيسي ابن مريم

[8] Sufyan bin U’uaynah (a scholar) said, “A person is a stranger, and needs others comfort and peace the most in three points in his life. The first is when one is born and needs his mother to take care of him. The second is when one dies and is in his grave alone. The third is when one is resurrected and stands before Allah.”

ما كن لله ان يتخذ من ولد19:34
Such was Jesus, son of Mary. It befits not (the Majesty of) Allah that He should beget a son. 19:34
Isa alayhe salam, in the Quran, is referred by four different attributes. The first one is “rooh Allah”. This is not to say he is the soul of Allah literally, but rather it is a phrase used to honor Isa alayhe salam and to show his endearment to Allah. The second phrase is “rooh minh”, meaning a soul from Allah. He is not a part of Allah physically, instead he is a soul from His creation.[9] Next, Isa alayhe salam is referred to as “kalimat Allah”, a word of Allah. This means he was created by words from Allah, “kun fa yakun”, be and it is.[10] Finally, he is called “maseeh” which means that he is “mamsooh al-khilqa”, or very handsome to look at, or from the word, “masaha” (to wipe), that he was able to cure illness with a mere touch.
Allah showered many miracles and blessings on Isa alayhe salam, including his very birth. The townspeople witnessed light from where Maryam alayha salam gave birth to him. They were drawn to the brightness of the light, but were stopped from entering the area since it was protected by angels.
Right after Isa’s birth, astrologers and fortune tellers informed the king of Persia that a messenger had been born. He sent a letter to the king of Damascus inquiring about any important births. The king of Damascus then sent a letter to Beit Al-Maqdis again wanting to know of any recent notable births. The people in Beit AlMaqdis replied that someone had been born of a miraculous birth. This child was born without a father. The king of Persia demanded he be killed. So Maryam alayha salam took her son to Egypt for their protection and she later returned.

وجعلنا ابن امريم الى ربوة ذات قرار ومعين

In Egypt, Maryam alayha salam and her son, Isa alayhe salam, stayed in a house of a wealthy and pious worshipper. He took them in and spent on them. He had a house for charity for the elderly, sick, and weak. He fed them and tended to all their needs. He had gold hidden near one of the walls of the house. One day, he

[9] There was a khalifah in the past that was debating Christians. The Christians told him they would embrace Islam if he would explain why in the Quran Jesus is referred to as a soul of Allah (rooh min). The khalifah was unable to answer so he referred the question to the scholars around him. The scholars replied by saying in the Quran Allah says the universe is of Him (from Him). Does that imply the universe is part of Allah? They answered no. So the scholars said the same way that Allah uses the universe to mean is of Him (from Him), he says that Jesus is of Him, from Him. It does not mean that Jesus and the universe is part of Allah, but rather from Allah (created by Allah).

[10] *Volume 4, Book 55, Number 644:* Narrated 'Ubada:

The Prophet said, "If anyone testifies that None has the right to be worshipped but Allah Alone Who has no partners, and that Muhammad is His Slave and His Apostle, and that Jesus is Allah's Slave and His Apostle and His Word which He bestowed on Mary and a Spirit created by Him, and that Paradise is true, and Hell is true, Allah will admit him into Paradise with the deeds which he had done even if those deeds were few." (Junada, the sub-narrator said, " 'Ubada added, 'Such a person can enter Paradise through any of its eight gates he likes.")

discovered it had been stolen. He gathered in his house and asked who had taken the gold. He insisted everyone be apprehended until his gold had been recovered. Isa alayhe salam, who was just a little boy, revealed that a blind man and another one who was paralyzed had conspired together to take the gold. He had confronted the two men and asserted that they return the gold or great evil would befall them. They were amazed as to how a child would have such knowledge and conviction. They asked him how he knew, and Isa alayhe salam replied that Allah had revealed it to him. The gold was returned immediately to the owner.

Isa alayhe salam received the revelation at the age of 30 and was sent to Bani Israel. At that time, they were living in the Al-Sham area, which is present day Syria, Palestine, Lebanon, and Jordan. He began to spread the word of God, and revealed he was his messenger.

When Isa alayhe salam began calling his people to Allah's way, they asked him for miracles, since they were practicing magic and medicine at that time.

وَيُعَلِّمُهُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرَاةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ

وَرَسُولًا إِلَى بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنِّي قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ أَنِّي أَخْلُقُ لَكُمْ مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ فَأَنْفُخُ فِيهِ فَيَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَأُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَهَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ وَأُحْيِي الْمَوْتَى بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا تَأْكُلُونَ وَمَا تَدَّخِرُونَ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

And He (Allah) will teach him (Jesus) the Book and Al-Hikmah (wisdom), and the Torah and the Gospel. 3:48

And will make him (Jesus) a Messenger to the Children of Israel (saying): "I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, that I design for you out of clay, as it were, the figure of a bird, and breathe into it, and it becomes a bird by Allah's leave; and I heal him who has born blind, and the leper, and I bring the dead to life by Allah's leave. And I inform you of what you eat, and what you store in your houses. Surely, therein is a sign for you, if you believe." 3:49

These verses state that one of the miracles was that Isa alayhe salam was given the book and wisdom, law, and gospel. This, however, was not enough for them. He made a figure of a bird from clay and breathed life into it, by the will of Allah. The bird flew away and again this was not enough for them. At the time of Isa alayhe salam, medical knowledge was at its height, yet they were not able to cure blindness. The miracles from Allah is always given to the messenger to coincide with that which is popular of their time. Isa alayhe salam was given the miracle of restoring sight to the blind, by the will of Allah. Even though his people were advanced medically, they understood that his ability to cure blindness was indeed a true miracle. He also was able to cure leprosy and gave life to the dead. Bani Israel took Isa alayhe salam to a graveyard where they asked him to give life to a man that had died. Isa alayhe salam brought that man back to life, by the will of Allah. He emerged from his grave with his clothes on and questioned why he had been brought back to life. He asked Isa alayhe salam to return him back to his grave since that abode was a better place for

him. Isa alayhe salam then made dua and the man died once again. Even after this miracle, Bani Israel still were skeptical.

On another occasion, Isa alayhe salam was once passing by a graveyard when he noticed a woman crying over a grave. He asked her who had been buried there. The woman stated it was her daughter and swore she would not leave her because of her love for her. In her grief, she wished to die with her daughter or her daughter be brought back to life. Isa alayhe salam proposed to her that if he brought her back to life again, would the woman then believe in his message. The woman agreed and Isa alayhe salam proceeded to command three times that the dead girl rise from her grave. The girl then was brought out of her grave. Isa alayhe salam questioned why it had taken so long for the girl to rise from her grave. She said that once she heard the first calling, Allah recreated her physical form. At his second command, an angel appeared over her head. Finally, her soul returned to her. As her soul returned to her body, the girl's hair turned to white from the horror that it might be the judgment day. The girl was appalled at the idea of experiencing the agony of death again and asked Isa alayhe salam to return her to her grave. At this point, the mother is silent and astonished at what she saw. Isa alayhe salam maked dua to Allah to return the girl to her grave and to ease her plight. His prayer was granted.

Bani Israel were still unconvinced of Isa alayhe salam and his message. They asked him what food sustained them and what they had stored in their houses. He responded correctly and yet they still did not believe. Isa alayhe salam informed them that he was sent to confirm the Tawrah and to make permissible what was previously forbidden.

They continued to bring him the sick, blind, and infirmed - those that are paralyzed or with terminal illnesses. With Allah's permission, he was able to cure them all.

During his lifetime, Isa alayhe salam was a humble servant to the word of Allah. He slept without a covering and wore wool. When he was reminded of the afterlife, he would scream and weep like a child. Before he began to preach the word of Allah, he was a handsome, young man. After spreading the message of Allah, he was often yellow from hunger with dry lips from thirst. He continued preaching of the oneness of Allah and of the Injeel.[11]

Isa's followers were from the poor and weak of the Bani Israel. He delivered numerous messages, one of which was the coming of a later messenger by the name of Ahmad.[12] Even with all miracles Isa alayhe salam was given by Allah, Bani Israel continued to disbelieve and stated that it was just black magic.

إِنْ هَـذَا إِلاَّ سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ

[11] The Prophet said the books were all revealed in Ramadan. The pages of Musa was revealed on the first day of Ramdan. The Tawrah on the sixth, Injil on the ninth, Zaboor on the 18th, and the Quran on the 27th day of Ramadan.

[12] Isa preached to his people that a messenger would follow him whose name was Ahmad. "And (remember) when Isa, son of Maryam, said: "Oh children of Israel! I am the Messenger of Allah unto you, confirming the Tawrah (which came) before me, and giving glad tidings of a Messenger to come after me, whose name is Ahmad. But when Ahmad (i.e. Muhammad) came to them with clear proofs, they said: "This is plain magic!" (Surat 61:6).

He traveled to Al-Nasirah in Palestine which was for him like Ta'if was for Prophet Muhammad salla allahu alayhe wasalam. However, in reality Al-Nasirah turned out to be like Madina was for the Prophet. He, too, called on the people for their support for a victory much like Muhammad salla allahu alayhe wasalam did in Ta'if. Isa alayhe salam gained a firm amount of following in Al-Nasirah, unlike the reaction of the people of Ta'if for Muhammad salla allahu alayhe wasalam. The disciples answered to his call by confirming they were Allah's helpers.[13] They proclaimed their belief and affirmed they were Muslims.

قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنصَارُ اللّهِ آمَنَّا بِاللّهِ وَاشْهَدْ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ
"We are the helpers of Allah; we believe in Allah, and bear witness that we are Muslims (we submit to Allah)." 3:52
Others, however, disbelieved and were arrogant of the message.

فَآمَنَت طَّائِفَةٌ مِّن بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَكَفَرَت طَّائِفَةٌ

"Then a group of the Children of Israel believed and a group disbelieved." 61:14
The Hawiryoon were true worshippers, like the Muhajireen and Ansar, who gave commitment to our Prophet Muhammad salla allahu alayhe wasalam. There were twelve disciples, and among the disciples were those that insisted on proof and were not willing to follow blindly. They presented Isa alayhe salam with challenges and demanded that he ask Allah for a feast from heaven as a miracle. Isa alayhe salam replied that they should fear Allah if they were believers because should such a miracle be granted - and they still do not believe – doom would befall them. They insisted on the firmness of their belief, but wanted this miracle only to further strengthen it. Isa alayhe salam then invoked Allah for food to be sent to them and to those that followed until the Day of Judgment.

إِذْ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ هَلْ يَسْتَطِيعُ رَبُّكَ أَن يُنَزِّلَ عَلَيْنَا مَآئِدَةً مِّنَ السَّمَاء قَالَ اتَّقُواْ اللّهَ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ(112)

(Remember) when al-Hawiryoon (the disciples) said: "Oh Isa, son of Maryam! Can your Lord send down to us a table spread (with food) from heaven?" Isa said, "Fear Allah, if you are indeed believers." 5:112

قَالُواْ نُرِيدُ أَن نَّأْكُلَ مِنْهَا وَتَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوبُنَا وَنَعْلَمَ أَن قَدْ صَدَقْتَنَا وَنَكُونَ عَلَيْهَا مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ
They said: "We wish to eat thereof and to satisfy our hearts (to be stronger in faith), and to know what you have indeed told us the truth and that we ourselves be its witnesses." 5:113

[13] That is why Christians are called Al-Nasara in Arabic. This is due to either of two reasons. The first is because they are attributed to the town of Al-Nasirah, which is where the great majority of his followers were from (that town). This is the opinion of most scholars. The other reason is when Jesus gave the speech in the town of Al-Nasirah he asked the people, "Man ansari ila Allah", who are my helpers to (the work of) Allah? The disciples answered his call to give him victory and help.

قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا أَنزِلْ عَلَيْنَا مَآئِدَةً مِّنَ السَّمَاء تَكُونُ لَنَا عِيداً لِّأَوَّلِنَا وَآخِرِنَا وَآيَةً مِّنكَ وَارْزُقْنَا وَأَنتَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ

Isa, son of Maryam, said: "Oh Allah, our Lord! Send us from that heaven a table spread (with food) that there may be for us - for the first and the last of us - a festival and a sign from You; and provide us with sustenance, for You are the best of sustainers. 5:114

قَالَ اللّهُ إِنِّي مُنَزِّلُهَا عَلَيْكُمْ فَمَن يَكْفُرْ بَعْدُ مِنكُمْ فَإِنِّي أُعَذِّبُهُ عَذَابًا لاَّ أُعَذِّبُهُ أَحَدًا مِّنَ الْعَالَمِينَ

Allah said: "I am going to send it down unto you, but if any of you after that disbelieves, then I will punish him with a torment such as I have not inflicted on anyone among (all) the 'Alamin (mankind and jinn)." 5:115

Allah granted this miracle and on their table was meat, olives, seafood, fruit, and bread. Then angels, in the form of humans, brought the food down for them. The disciples were afraid to eat from it. Isa alayhe salam brought the poor and needy to the table, and so the disciples began to eat as well. Some began to steal of Allah's blessings and so He transformed them into apes and swine. The only restrictions Isa alayhe salam placed were that one should not deceive in their consumption, steal, or horde the food. As they ate, the food continued to increase in quantity. However, it is disputed by some, if the feast actually came down, but most narrations confirm its authenticity.

The Prophet salla allahu alayhe wasalam stated the two that will receive the most severe punishment; they will be the people of Fir'aun and al-Ma'ida, those that disbelieved in the feast and the other miracles of Isa alayhe salam.

Those that held knowledge and rank wanted to kill the weak, worshippers, and believers in Isa alayhe salam. The oppressed wanted to raise arms, but Isa alayhe salam appeased them by saying that he had come with miracles and proof from Allah. He advised them that if one was slapped on the left cheek, then to offer the offender the right as well. He assured them that Allah is the granter of victory.

After going to Al-Nasirah, Isa's followers grew in numbers. The Jews went to the Romans and all the local kings that had taken over Palestine. They instigated fear and hatred for Isa alayhe salam, claiming that if he was not killed, he would take over their kingdoms. The King of Egypt called on the King of Beit Al-Maqdis and asked how long they planned to leave Isa alayhe salam. He cited imminent danger for them, since Isa alayhe salam called for piety, sincerity, and the resistance of temptations. They feared he would destroy their world as it was, so they decided to crucify him.

Allah had revealed this outcome to Isa alayhe salam through Angel Jibril.[14] He was told that a conspiracy calling for Isa's death was in the works. He entered upon

[14] This story of how Isa found out about the plan to kill him was narrated by Ibn Abbas, that can be found in Ibn Katheer and Hakim. It should be noted that when one hears a story narrated by a sahaba, it is one of two things. It is either mawqoof or marfoo'. Mawqoof means that the companion narrated something from himself. When a sahaba narrates something the Rasul sallahu alayhe wasalam said, then it is called marfoo'. However, when it is mawqoof, we sometimes take that saying as if the Prophet sallahu alayhe wasalam said it himself. In matters where there is no difference in opinion or guesses (for example, fiqh, the unseen, faith), and it is something only Allah and

his disciples after having bathed and revealed Jibril's news. Isa alayhe salam asked his disciples who would sacrifice, and have their features altered to look like Isa alayhe salam. They would then take his place and be crucified. This person was promised a place in heaven with Isa alayhe salam. An adolescent volunteered by saying he would willingly take his place. Isa alayhe salam told him to sit and dismissed his zeal. He posed the question to the group, and again the boy was the only one to offer to sacrifice himself. Yet again, Isa alayhe salam disregarded him. Isa alayhe salam asked a third time, and the same boy spoke up. This time Prophet Isa alayhe salam wiped his head and gave him words of inspiration, as well as made dua for him. He cautioned the youth that Romans and Jews would enter and find him with Isa's physical features. He furthered continued to explain that he would be taken and killed. Throughout, they would not see Isa alayhe salam, since he would have ascended to the heavens.[15]

The Jews and Romans discovered where Isa alayhe salam and his followers were. According to a weak narration, they found where Isa alayhe salam was, through one of the disciples who was tortured and admitted, under pressure, where Isa alayhe salam had been hiding. The Romans and Jews entered upon the young boy, thinking he was Isa alayhe salam, and began to torture him. The boy, who was made to look like Isa alayhe salam, was taken and on his head they placed a crown of thorns. They nailed his feet and hands to a cross and he was crucified.

وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَـكِن شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُواْ فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ مَا لَهُم بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلاَّ اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا

And because of their saying (in boast), "We killed Messiah Isa, son of Maryam, the Messenger of Allah," – but they killed him not, nor crucified him, but the resemblance of Isa was put over another man (and they killed that man), and those who differ therein are full of doubts.[16] They have no (certain) knowledge, they follow nothing but conjecture. For surely; they killed him not, Isa, son of Maryam. 4:157

The Jews not only bragged about killing a human being, but a messenger – a messenger from among ulu al'azm, and the best of messengers.

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his messenger know, then we take it as if the Rasul said it, even if a companion has narrated it. There is no way that Ibn Abbas could have made this story up; he must have heard it from the Rasul at one time.

[15] It is said in another narration that a man by the name of Yahuda al-Askhayooty, a disciple, was the one who deceived Isa alayhe salam and told the Romans and Jews where Isa was. Then in retaliation, Allah made him look like Isa and therefore, it was him who was crucified. This narration is weak and the one previously mentioned is the stronger one.

[16] "And those who differ therein are full of doubts." The reason for this was due to the number of disciples there were. It is known that Isa had 12 disciples, which makes 13 including him. After crucifying who they thought to be Isa, there should have been 12 people. When the disciples were counted, only 11 were present. As Muslims, we believe that Isa had ascended and the 13th was crucified. This is why there was a discrepancy and they (Jews and Romans) were full of doubts.

وَمَكَرُواْ وَمَكَرَ اللّهُ وَاللّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَاكِرِينَ

And they (disbelievers) plotted (to kill Isa), and Allah planned too. And Allah is the best of those who plot. 3:54

After Isa's mother heard the news of the crucifixion, she was in a state of shock. She cried hysterically until she met a man who she knew to be Angel Jibril. He assured her that they did not kill her son, but someone who was made to look like him. She insisted that he had been crucified, but Angel Jibril revealed that Isa alayhe salam had ascended to the heavens.

A core belief of Islam is Isa's ascension to heaven and that he is living and will return. The details of his ascension and his existence in the heavens are not known, as Allah knows best. Prior to his ascension, he had been in a state of sleep for three days. Allah said:

اذ قال الله ياعيسى اني متوفيك ورافعك الي ومطهرك من الذين كفروا

And (remember) when Allah said: "Oh Isa! I will take you and raise you to Myself and clear you (of the forged statement that Jesus is Allah's son) of those who disbelieve." 3:55

The term "wafat" that is used means sleep or death. Allah says:

الله يتوفي الانفس حين موتها والتي لم تمت في منامها

In these verses, however, to be asleep is implied. The Prophet said that sleep is akin to death. Sleep is like a short death, just as the Prophet taught us to say after awaking, "Alhamdulilah alathy ahyana ba'ada amatna", Praise be to Allah, the One that gave us life after our death. The term "wafat" here, according to Ibn Abbas, signifies that Allah cast sleep upon him, possibly for three days.

ويكلم الناس في المهد وكهلا

"He shall speak to the people in childhood and in maturity. And he shall be (of the company) of the righteous." 3:46

Another term used is "kahlan", meaning the height of youth. One attains maturity between the ages of 35-45. This period is called "kahlan". When Isa escalated to the heavens, he was 33 years old and will return as the same age. The miracle lies in his return to earth to complete his mission.

After Isa's ascension, the disciples began to spread the message and continued to follow a righteous path. They were abused, oppressed, and tortured by the Jews of their time. So much so, that none remained alive.

People dispersed in all directions. Some claimed that Isa alayhe salam was God. Others claimed he was the son of God. Yet, others said that he is one of three parts - the Trinity.

Confusion continued until the arrival of the promised messenger – Muhammad salla allahu alayhe wasalam. He came to confirm the word of Allah and to clarify the position of Isa alayhe salam.

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ قُلْ فَمَنْ يَمْلِكُ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا إِنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُهْلِكَ الْمَسِيحَ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَأُمَّهُ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

Surely, in disbelief are they who say that Allah is the Mesiah, son of Maryam. Say: "Who then has the least power against Allah, if He were to destroy the Messiah, sone of Maryam, his mother, and all those who are on the earth together?" And to Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them. He creates what He wills. And Allah is Able to do all things. 5:17

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَقَالَ الْمَسِيحُ يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ مَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوَاهُ النَّارُ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِن أنصار

Surely, they have disbelieved who say: "Allah is the Messiah, son of Maryam." But the Messiah (Isa) said: "O Children of Israel! Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord." Verily whosoever sets up partners (in worship) with Allah, then Allah has forbidden Paradise to him, and the fire will be his abode. And for the wrongdoers there are no helpers. 5:72

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ ثَالِثُ ثَلَاثَةٍ وَمَا مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِلَّا إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ وَإِنْ لَمْ يَنْتَهُوا عَمَّا يَقُولُونَ لَيَمَسَّنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ
They do Kuffar/infidels who say: Allah is one of three in a Trinity: for there is no god except One God. If they desist not from their word (of blasphemy), verily a grievous penalty will befall the blasphemers among them. 5:73
يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ وَلَا تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْحَقَّ إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُ أَلْقَاهَا إِلَى مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِنْهُ فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَلَا تَقُولُوا ثَلَاثَةٌ انْتَهُوا خَيْرًا لَكُمْ إِنَّمَا اللَّهُ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ سُبْحَانَهُ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وكيلا

O People of the Book! commit no excesses in your religion: nor say of Allah aught but the truth. Al-Masih 'Isa the son of Maryam was (no more than) A Messenger of Allah, and His Word, which He bestowed on Maryam, and a Spirit proceeding from Him: so believe in Allah and His Messengers. Say not "Trinity": desist: it will be better for you: for Allah is One God: glory be to Him: (far Exalted is He) above having a son. To Him belong all things in the heavens and on earth. And enough is Allah as a Disposer of affairs. 4:171

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ عُزَيْرٌ ابْنُ اللَّهِ وَقَالَتِ النَّصَارَى الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ قَوْلُهُمْ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ يُضَاهِئُونَ قَوْلَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ قَاتَلَهُمُ اللَّهُ أَنَّى يُؤْفَكُونَ
The Jews call 'Uzair a son of Allah, and the Christians call Al-Masih the son of Allah. That is a saying from their mouth; (in this) they but imitate what the Unbelievers of old used to say. Allah's curse be on them: how they are deluded away from the Truth! 9:30

The return of Isa alayhe salam is a well-anticipated event for Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Many years after Isa's ascension, Prophet Muhammad salla allahu alayhe wasalam met him during Isra and Al-Ma'araj, where he saw him walking around the Ka'abah in the second heaven. Prophet Muhammad salla allahu alayhe wasalam also described him in another hadith, narrated by Abu Dawood, so that one would be able to recognize him upon his return.

He had a fair complexion with a ruddiness to his skin. His complexion was pure and radiant, as if glowing with beads of water. Isa alayhe salam was neither tall nor short. His hair was described as neither curly nor straight, with a soft texture. It was long and reached half-way down his back, glistening as if it were wet or oiled. His physical frame was well built with broad chest and shoulders. Though he was full figured, he was neither fat nor thin.

Since his escalation to the heavens, it was apparent that it was not an actual death – just the end of his existence on earth for a given time. Therefore, he must return again once more to complete his mission and die. His return will discredit the claims the Jews and Christians made regarding his crucifixion. The world will be shown that the mission of Isa alayhe salam was Islamic since he will rule with the sharia' legislation upon his return.

Isa's return is an actual sign of the advent of the Judgment Day. He will return in the east near Damascus. He will come down near a white minaret with each hand on a wing of an angel. His head will be bowed down to Allah and from it will fall beads of sweat, dripping as though they were pearls or diamonds.

He will descend upon Palestine heading for Beit Al-Maqdis during the time of iqama for the prayer of Fajr or Asr. The imam will have immediately recognized his presence and will ask him to lead the prayer. Isa alayhe salam will decline stating that the iqama was for the Muslims, and they are to lead one another. This implies that he has not returned with a new message, but rather as a follower of the message of Prophet Muhammad salla allahu alayhe wasalam, since all prophets came with the message of Islam.

After the prayer, Isa alayhe salam orders the door of Beit Al-Maqdis be opened and that is when they see Dajjal with 70,000 Jewish soldiers. Dajjal will melt as salt dissolves in water, at the sight of Isa – his fear of Isa alayhe salam will be so great! This will be Isa's first task to eliminate the Dajjal, who will attempt to run, but Isa alayhe salam along with the help of the Muslims will strike him down at Bab Al-Lid (door). He will end the evil reign of the Dajjal.

Another important task Isa alayhe salam will carry out upon his arrival will be to break the cross. This action will illustrate the incorrect belief that it has come to signify. He will then continue to slaughter all the pigs of the world, since it was revealed in the Bible to abstain from eating pork. However, since this revelation was tampered with, people continued in their consumption of this unclean animal. This action will illustrate the incorrect detailed belief of the Christians after their tamper. Lastly, we will also call people to tawheed, or the oneness of Allah.

It is described in one hadith that Isa alayhe salam will live on earth for 40 years, while another states he will live for seven. This has been a cause of confusion, though the matter is relatively simple, meaning that his life on earth will total 40 years (his ascension at the age of 33 plus the seven upon his return). He will die at the age of

40 and the Muslims will perform janazah prayer upon him, and according to scholars he will be buried in Medina next to the prophet Muhammad salla allahu alayhe wasalam.

During the seven years, Islamic rule will have been established as the supreme religion. Peace and tranquility will have been spread on the earth and iman (faith) will have been instilled in the hearts of mankind.

Allah reveals to Isa alayhe salam during this time that there are people called Gog and Magog will attack mankind. At that point in time, they established their dominance on earth and will then wish to reign what is in the skies. As they spread their rule, they will eat all crops and drink an equivalent of an ocean. They destroy pillage and ravage all that comes in their path. It is said that as the first of them pass by a body of water, the last of them will say there once was water here. Their mischief and oppression was limitless and Allah ordered Isa alayhe salam and his followers to seek refuge in the mountain of Al-Tur. There they plead with Allah and made dua for Him to destroy them. The oppressor is always destroyed by the most innocuous means to illustrate the insignificance of their existence. Therefore Allah brought about their destruction through worms in their neck which killed each one.

After Gog and Magog are killed, Isa alayhe salam and his followers leave Al-Tur and find the earth full of their rotting corpses. Their smell and the froth that will come from their mouths will be so potent that it will corrupt the world and make it unlivable. Again Isa alayhe salam and his believers will make dua to Allah to remove their bodies. Allah will answer their prayers and will send birds with long necks like those of a camel to do away with their bodies. The stench of the bodies will still be prevalent so Allah will send wind and rain which will leave the earth clean and pure.

Allah then will order the earth to bring forth its blessings and all evil will be eliminated and the inhabitants of the earth will reside in peace.[17] Finally, Isa alayhe salam will perform Hajj, travel to Madina, and will pass away there. The Muslims pray upon him, and he will be buried next to the Prophet Muhammad salla allahu alayhe wasalam and Abu Bakr. Soon after all the good people of the earth will die by a breeze, leaving only the evil ones behind who will hear the final trumpet. The evil will reach a point where there will be open lewdness and rampant transgression. This will indicate the end of time and the beginning of the judgment.

The final days will be trying times for all. The return of Isa alayhe salam will be a blessing for the righteous and an eradication of all evil and wrong doers. Allah's supreme plan for mankind and his messenger's (Isa) role on earth will be fulfilled. The story of Isa alayhe salam is one that brings hope and comfort for believers during the most dire times in the history of the world. All things will perish before the Day

[17] There will be so much peace and blessing on the earth, so much so that even humans will be able to cohabit with animals without fear of harm. A lion and camel eat together, cow and a tiger, sheep and a wolf will graze with each other in harmony. A wolf will be the servant of a sheep. A young boy will pass by a lion unharmed, like a young girl will pass by a snake. There will be peace and prosperity throughout the universe without oppression, because of the baraka that Isa will be given, as he said "Allah made me a blessing wherever I am." There will be so much baraka (blessing) in food, that it is described in a hadith that a pomegranate will feed a large group of people. They will be able to use its skin as a tent, implying its abundance. Allah will place his blessings in wealth and food. For example, a cow will feed a large population, a calf will be enough for a town, a lamb will suffice for a tribe. (Hadith can be found in Muslim).

of Judgment and all things destined will have been accomplished. So the role of Isa alayhe salam is one of the most critical one's in Allah's plan.

May He strengthen the hearts of the believers and have mercy on them during those desperate times. May He hold our hearts steadfast to the religion of truth and not allow them to digress (stray) from it. He alone we ask, He alone we seek for our strength, and He alone we ask to accept our doings. Allahumma Ameen.

Allah burdens not a person beyond his scope. He gets reward for that (good) which he has earned, and he is punished for that (evil) which he has earned. "Our Lord! Punish us not if we forget or fall into error, Our Lord! Lay not on us a burden like that which You did lay on those before us; our Lord! Put not on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear. Pardon us and grant us Forgiveness. Have mercy on us. You are our Maula and give us victory over the disbelieving people." (Surat Al-Baqara: 286)

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